

September 15, 2014

## **Attachment A: Proposed Health Literacy Questions for the 2016 BRFSS**

OADC asks that all 9 questions go through cognitive testing.

Questions 4 and 5 are different versions of the same basic question. We want to keep the one that performs better in cognitive testing and drop the other.

Several questions include “in your primary language” because other researchers that work with Hispanic populations find that people will answer differently if they think you’re asking about their experiences in English or Spanish. We don’t know if “in your primary language” is clarifying or confusing. An alternative would be to add an introductory statement that the interviewer reads. Perhaps something like: The next XX questions are about health information you get in the language you prefer to speak at home. So if you mostly speak Spanish at home, these next questions are about health information that comes to you in Spanish.”

We propose only Questions 1 and 2 for the Core or Emerging Core. If either or both Questions 1 or 2 are accepted for the Core or Emerging Core, then we ask that questions that perform well in cognitive testing be grouped as an Optional Module. If neither Questions 1 or 2 is accepted for the Core or Emerging Core, then we ask that all questions that perform well in cognitive testing be grouped into an Optional Module.

### **Proposed Core or Emerging Core Questions:**

1. How difficult is it for you to understand the medical terms that doctors, nurses and other health professionals use when they talk to you in your primary language?
  - a. Not at all difficult
  - b. A little difficult
  - c. Somewhat difficult
  - d. Very difficult
  - e. Don’t know/not sure
  - f. Refused
  
2. You can find written health information on the Internet, in newspapers and magazines, and brochures in the doctor’s office or clinic. In general, how difficult is it for you to understand written health information in your primary language?
  - a. Not at all difficult
  - b. A little difficult
  - c. Somewhat difficult
  - d. Very difficult
  - e. I don’t use written health information
  - f. Don’t know/not sure
  - g. Refused

## Additional Questions for an Optional Module

3. Health forms, such as health histories and questionnaires, use medical and specialized words. How difficult is it for you to fill out these forms in your primary language because of confusing or unfamiliar words?
  - a. Not at all difficult
  - b. A little difficult
  - c. Somewhat difficult
  - d. Very difficult
  - e. Never tried
  - f. Don't know/not sure
  - g. Refused
4. In general, it is easy for me to read and understand information in my primary language about how to stay healthy and prevent the flu or other conditions, such as heart disease or diabetes.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly disagree
  - e. I don't use written health information
  - f. Don't know/not sure
  - g. Refused
5. How difficult is it for you to find useful information in your primary language about how to stay healthy and prevent the flu or a condition such as heart disease or diabetes?
  - a. Not at all difficult
  - b. A little difficult
  - c. Somewhat difficult
  - d. Very difficult
  - e. Don't know/not sure
  - f. Refused
6. I always compare health information sources before I make up my mind.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly disagree
  - e. I don't use health information
  - f. Don't know/not sure
  - g. Refused
7. How difficult is it for you to read and understand package or bottle directions in your primary language about how to take medicines?
  - a. Not at all difficult
  - b. A little difficult

- c. Somewhat difficult
  - d. Very difficult
  - e. I don't read medicine package or bottle directions
  - f. Don't know/not sure
  - g. Refused
8. Let's say that your doctor or other health professional says something that you don't completely understand. How likely are you to ask the doctor to explain the information again in a way you can understand?
- a. Not at all likely
  - b. Somewhat likely
  - c. Most likely
  - d. Very likely
  - e. Don't know/not sure
  - f. Refused
9. In general, I can talk to my doctor, nurse or other healthcare provider about my questions and concerns.
- a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Disagree
  - d. Strongly disagree
  - e. Don't know/not sure
  - f. Refused

Questions adapted from multiple sources:

- National Assessment of Adult Literacy: <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/>
- CAHPS health literacy questions: choose the pdf that is the health literacy item set on this page <https://cahps.ahrq.gov/surveys-guidance/item-sets/literacy/index.html>
- Health Information National Trends Survey: <http://hints.cancer.gov/>
- Chew LD, et al 2008 (article attached to email submission)
- Osborne R, et al 2013 (article attached to email submission)